



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **DHS CHILD SUPPORT DIVISION AWARDED GRANT TO HELP NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS FIND WORK** KNOX COUNTY PROGRAM SEEKS TO INCREASE CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— The Tennessee Department of Human Services is joining forces with community and state agencies in Knox County to increase child support collections while helping non-custodial parents find work. And the federal government is rewarding Tennessee for its efforts.

More than \$200,000 in grant money was recently awarded to DHS for its *Child Support Employment and Parenting Partnership* program. The targets of this initiative are low-income non-custodial parents who cannot pay their child support because they cannot find work. The parent's child must also be receiving Families First benefits. Families First is the state's welfare-to-work program. Nearly one third of all child support cases in Knox County are Families First cases.

"This is an excellent example of diverse community and state organizations coming together for a common cause," said Mike Adams, Assistant Commissioner for Child Support. "We are confident this program will yield results that will benefit not only the child, but the parent, as well."

DHS will be working with the Knoxville Area Career Centers, a division of the state Department of Labor and Workforce Development, to improve employment services available to non-custodial parents. Other partners in the program include, among others, Policy Studies, Inc., the Knox County Juvenile Court, and the University of Tennessee College of Social Work.

The original \$60,000, 17-month grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is increased to \$207,000 after federal matching funds are applied. The grant monies will cover 95 percent of the program costs. The funds are made available through Section 1115 of the Social Security Act, which requires projects like the *Child Support Employment and Parenting Partnership* to improve the financial well-being of children. In addition to increasing collections, the program will improve the non-custodial parent's parenting skills.

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Tennessee was one of only four states to be awarded this grant. The other recipients include California, Iowa and Texas.

For more information on the Child Support Program, visit the DHS website at:  
<http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/child-support.htm>

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